

Introduced by Senator Padilla
(Principal coauthor: Senator Torlakson)
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Ma)
(Coauthor: Senator Ducheny)
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Bass)

February 8, 2007

An act to add Part 5 (commencing with Section 71400) to Division 34 of the Public Resources Code, relating to parks and recreation.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 207, as introduced, Padilla. Parks and recreation: Outdoor Education and Recreation Program.

Existing law establishes the Office of Education and Environment in the Integrated Waste Management Board for the purpose of implementing a statewide environmental education program.

This bill would establish the Outdoor Education and Recreation Program, to be administered by the Director of Parks and Recreation (director), for the purpose of increasing the ability of underserved and at-risk populations to participate in outdoor activities and educational experiences by awarding grants to formal school programs and informal public education programs. The bill would create the Outdoor Education and Recreation Fund in the State Treasury that, upon appropriation by the Legislature, would be used for awarding grants pursuant to the program. The bill would authorize the director to accept for, and require the director to deposit in, the fund voluntary private donations made for support of the program. The bill would express the Legislature's intent that the fund be capitalized with moneys from the General Fund and donations.

The bill would require the director to develop program components, including, but not limited to, criteria for awarding grants, and staffing and budget needs. The bill would require the California Environmental Education Interagency Network to serve as an advisor to the director in developing the program components. The bill would require the director to give priority for funding, where feasible, to outdoor environmental education programs with specified attributes. The bill would require the director to submit, by January 1, 2009, to the Governor and the Legislature a report and recommendation for the implementation of the program.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (a) The California Environmental Education Interagency
4 Network (CEEIN) was established in 1993 as a consortium of
5 environmental educators representing departments, boards, and
6 commissions of the State Department of Education, the California
7 Environmental Protection Agency, the Resources Agency, and the
8 Department of Food and Agriculture. The primary goals of CEEIN
9 are to develop a unified response to the environmental education
10 needs of California's educators and local governments, and to
11 assist with the statewide educational reform movements.

12 (b) The Legislature enacted Chapter 663 of the Statutes of 2003,
13 which established the Outdoor Environmental Education Program
14 and required a study on the benefits of outdoor environmental
15 education for at-risk youth and underserved demographic groups.
16 The study found that the science test scores of children who
17 participated in these programs were raised by 27 percent, and these
18 children also had improved conflict resolution and problem solving
19 skills, self-esteem, and motivation to learn. This program ended
20 on January 1, 2006.

21 (c) The Legislature enacted Resolution Chapter 101 of the
22 Statutes of 2006, which recognized the importance of local
23 recreation and park agencies in the effort to reverse negative trends
24 in inactivity, obesity, diabetes, and other health problems among

1 Californians and encouraged the state to utilize and partner with
2 local recreation and park providers to create a healthier state.

3 SEC. 2. Part 5 (commencing with Section 71400) is added to
4 Division 34 of the Public Resources Code, to read:

5
6 PART 5. OUTDOOR EDUCATION AND RECREATION
7

8 71400. As used in this part, the following terms mean the
9 following:

10 (a) "Director" means the Director of Parks and Recreation.

11 (b) "Fund" means the Outdoor Education and Recreation Fund
12 established pursuant to Section 71402.

13 (c) "Program" means the Outdoor Education and Recreation
14 Program established pursuant to Section 71401.

15 71401. There is hereby established the Outdoor Education and
16 Recreation Program in the Department of Parks and Recreation
17 for the purpose of increasing the ability of underserved and at-risk
18 populations to participate in outdoor activities and educational
19 experiences by awarding grants to formal school programs and
20 informal public education programs.

21 71402. (a) There is hereby established the Outdoor Education
22 and Recreation Fund in the State Treasury that, upon appropriation
23 by the Legislature, shall be used for awarding grants to qualified
24 outdoor environmental education programs pursuant to this part.

25 (b) It is intended that the fund be capitalized with moneys from
26 the General Fund and from donations accepted by the director
27 pursuant to Section 71404.

28 (c) The Controller shall transfer from the General Fund to the
29 fund the amount appropriated from the General Fund by the
30 Legislature for each fiscal year for the implementation of the
31 program.

32 71403. The director shall do all of the following:

33 (a) Administer the program to ensure that priority is given to
34 underserved populations, including both urban and rural areas and
35 low-income communities where participation in an outdoor
36 education program has been limited.

37 (b) (1) Develop the components of the program and fund,
38 including, but not limited to, criteria for awarding grants, and
39 staffing and budget needs.

(2) The California Environmental Education Interagency Network (CEEIN) shall serve as advisor to the director in developing the program components.

(3) In developing the criteria for awarding grant moneys, the director shall give priority for funding, where feasible, to outdoor environmental education programs that have the following attributes:

(A) Serves primarily at-risk youth and underserved demographic groups.

(B) Is a partnership between public and private entities.

(C) Contributes to healthy lifestyles, including sound nutrition and outdoor exercise.

(D) Maximizes the number of participants that can be served.

(E) Commits in-kind resources to the outdoor environmental education program.

(F) Has a curriculum that is aligned to the science content standards for California public schools adopted by the State Board of Education, fosters stewardship of the environment, and includes, when available, curriculum established pursuant to Chapter 663 of the Statutes of 2003.

(G) Includes service learning and community outreach components for the purpose of building partnerships between participants and local communities.

(c) Notwithstanding Section 7550.5 of the Government Code, submit, on or before January 1, 2009, a report and recommendation to the Governor and the Legislature on the implementation of the program.

71404. The director may accept and shall deposit into the fund voluntary private donations made for the support of the program.